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of the preliminary list*
COOPERATION BETWEEN THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE LEAGUE OF ARAB STATES
THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST
QUESTION OF PALESTINE
CONSEQUENCES OF THE IRAQI OCCUPATION OF AND AGGRESSION AGAINST KUWAIT
ESTABLISHMENT OF A NUCLEAR-WEAPON-FREE ZONE IN THE REGION OF THE MIDDLE EAST
MEASURES TO ELIMINATE INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-first year

Letter dated 16 July 1996 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Oman to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of the final communiqué issued by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Damascus Declaration States at the conclusion of their thirteenth meeting, held at Muscat on 13 and 14 July 1996 under the chairmanship of Mr. Yousef Bin Alawi Bin Abdullah, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of the Sultanate of Oman.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under items 30, 33, 35, 53, 67 and 154 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Mohammed A. AL-SAMEEN
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

* A/51/50.

ANNEX

[Original: Arabic]

Final communiqué of the thirteenth meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Damascus Declaration States, issued at Muscat on 14 July 1996

At the invitation of the Sultanate of Oman, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Damascus Declaration States held their thirteenth meeting at Muscat on 13 and 14 July 1996 under the chairmanship of His Excellency Mr. Yousef Bin Alawi Bin Abdullah, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of the Sultanate of Oman. The following were in attendance:

His Excellency Sheikh Hamdan Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates;

His Excellency Sheikh Mohammed Bin Mubarak Al Khalifa, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bahrain;

His Royal Highness Prince Saud al-Faisal, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Saudi Arabia;

His Excellency Mr. Farouk al-Shara', Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Syrian Arab Republic;

His Excellency Sheikh Hamad Bin Jassem Bin Jabr Al Thani, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Qatar;

His Excellency Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jaber al-Sabah, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kuwait;

His Excellency Mr. Amre Moussa, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Egypt.

His Excellency Sheikh Jamil Bin Ibrahim al-Hegelan, Secretary-General of the Gulf Cooperation Council, also participated in the meeting.

The Minsters met while bearing in mind the role played by the Damascus Declaration States in promoting Arab solidarity, advancing the interests of the Arab nation and safeguarding joint Arab security and in response to the requirements of the upcoming stage, which will be of great importance and moment as it relates, in particular, to the peace process in the Middle East in the light of regional and international developments.

The Ministers affirmed their full commitment to upholding and acting in accordance with the substance of the final communiqué adopted by the Arab Summit Conference held in Cairo from 21 to 23 June 1996 and the firm positions of principle adopted by the consensus of the Arab leaders with a view to strengthening Arab solidarity and establishing a just peace in response to the hopes and aspirations of the Arab nation, so as to advance the interests and

restore the impugned rights of that nation and in order to monitor the formulation of effective Arab action for the next stage.

The Ministers stressed the firm positions of principle of their countries with respect to the requirements of the peace process and the need to adhere to the principles on which it has been based since the Madrid Conference. This requires: complete Israeli withdrawal from the Golan to the line of 4 June 1967; complete and unconditional Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon and the western Bekaa to the internationally recognized boundaries; the complete withdrawal of Israel from all occupied Palestinian territories, including Arab Jerusalem; and recognition of the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people, including its right to exercise self-determination and establish an independent State on its own soil.

The Ministers commended the broad international consensus in support of the Arab position on the peace process, as embodied in the statements adopted by the Florence Summit of the European Union, the Lyon Summit of the group of seven industrialized countries and the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity held in Cameroon, as well as in the statements adopted earlier by the Casablanca Islamic Summit Conference and the Cartagena Conference of Heads of State or Government of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. In this context, the Ministers affirmed that the continuation of the peace process and the resumption of negotiations require commitment to the principles and norms on which the peace process is based, particularly Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 425 (1978), the principle of land for peace and the assurances given to the parties.

The Ministers expressed deep concern at the statements made by the Israeli Prime Minister during his recent visit to the United States, particularly those relating to his insistence on perpetuating Israel's occupation of Arab territories and on retaining Jerusalem under Israeli sovereignty as the capital of Israel on the pretext of safeguarding Israel's security. This is an attempt to impose a fait accompli that undermines the viability of the negotiations and is a departure from the principle of land for peace and a violation of the enduring principle on which the peace process is based, namely the achievement of balanced and equal security for all the States of the region without discrimination or exception and not merely for Israel alone. The same is true of his statements calling for a resumption of peace negotiations without preconditions, which is a denial and evasion of commitment to the principles derived from the relevant United Nations resolutions on which the peace process is based. Likewise, his call for reciprocity, when measured against the positions he has taken rejecting the principles and foundations of the peacemaking process, is an invitation for the region to return to a climate of confrontation and tension. The Ministers expressed surprise and astonishment that the Israeli Prime Minister should speak of democracy and human rights while Israel is pursuing a policy of occupation and of violating rights that are guaranteed by the Geneva Conventions to Arab citizens languishing under Israeli occupation and while it is being evasive and dilatory in discharging the obligations that it took upon itself within the framework of the peace process. In this context, the Ministers reaffirmed the conclusion of the Arab Summit Conference to the effect that the insistence of the Israeli Government on such positions is likely to cause a collapse of the peace process bringing with it

such dangers and consequences as will once more plunge the region into a maelstrom of tension and force all the Arab States to reconsider the steps taken vis-à-vis Israel in the framework of that process. The Israeli Government alone would bear the entire responsibility for such a situation.

The Ministers further reaffirm their commitment to the United Nations resolutions requiring the non-recognition and non-acceptance of any situation resulting from Israeli settlement activities in the occupied territories, inasmuch as such activities create no rights and no obligations. They consider that the establishment of settlements and the introduction of settlers violate the Geneva Conventions and the Madrid framework and represent an impediment to the peace process.

Recalling the assurances recently given by the United States of America, as one of the co-sponsors of the peace process, that that process must be based on the foundations established at the time it began at the Madrid Conference and on the principle of land for peace, that the Israeli Government must comply with all the undertakings given and all the obligations assumed, and that security cannot be attained without the achievement of peace, the Ministers call upon the co-sponsors of the peace process, the United States of America and the Russian Federation, on the European Union, China, Japan, the States members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and other concerned States and on the United Nations and other international institutions to give practical effect to these assurances and to ensure that Israel does not violate the principles on which the peace process is based, supported as they are by United Nations resolutions, including Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 425 (1978), or the principle of land for peace, or the assurances provided to the parties, and that it fulfils all the commitments made in the framework of the peace process.

The Ministers reaffirmed the support of their countries for Syria's legitimate desiderata for the achievement of a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East based on international legitimacy. They further expressed their support for Syria in overcoming the obstacles to the peace process being raised by Israel and in addressing the calumnies with which it is charging Syria for the purpose of halting the peace process.

The Ministers stressed that Israel must accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and place all of its nuclear facilities under the international inspection regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency as a fundamental step towards transforming the Middle East region, including the Gulf area, into a zone free of weapons of mass destruction, foremost among which are nuclear weapons.

The Ministers urged Iraq to commit itself to the full implementation of the Security Council resolutions relating to its aggression against Kuwait and called upon it to take the appropriate measures to release all Kuwaiti and third-country prisoners and detainees, to return the property seized, to abide by the compensation mechanism, to cooperate fully with the efforts of the United Nations Special Commission entrusted with the task of eliminating its weapons of mass destruction, and to comply with Security Council resolution 949 (1994) by refraining from any provocative or hostile action that threatens the State of Kuwait and the countries of the region. The Ministers welcomed the memorandum

of understanding signed on 20 May 1996 by Iraq and the United Nations for the implementation of Security Council resolution 986 (1995), which permits the sale of two billion dollars' worth of Iraqi oil, as a positive step towards mitigating the suffering of the Iraqi people for which the Iraqi Government bears full responsibility. They call for dispatch in giving effect to the memorandum of understanding. The Ministers renewed their full commitment to Iraq's unity and expressed their opposition to any policies or measures aimed at undermining its territorial integrity.

The Ministers reviewed new developments in connection with their countries' relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran from the point of view of their desire for such relations to be sound and positive. They stressed the great importance of security and stability in the Gulf region for the entire world and, in particular, for the countries and peoples of the region itself, including Iran, given that the security of the region is an integral part of the security of the Arab nation as a whole and is organically linked with the security and stability of all the Arab States.

The Ministers reaffirmed their solidarity with Bahrain and their full support for the measures it is taking to ensure its security and stability. They expressed firm rejection of any intervention in the internal affairs of Bahrain and affirmed that they would support it against any attempts at intimidation made by any party whatever.

Recalling that the Arab Summit Conference had urged Iran to respect the sovereignty of Bahrain within a framework of mutual respect and relations of good-neighbourliness, the Ministers expressed appreciation for the efforts made by Syria that had brought a halt to the media campaigns as a first step towards clearing the air with respect to Bahraini-Iranian relations and placing them on a basis of mutual understanding and good-neighbourliness so as to help strengthen the security and stability of Bahrain and the other States of the region.

The Ministers reviewed with great concern the issue of the Iranian occupation of the Greater Tunb, the Lesser Tunb and Abu Musa, three islands belonging to the United Arab Emirates, and the efforts that country is making to restore its sovereignty over the islands by peaceful means in accordance with established international practice relating to the peaceful settlement of disputes among States on the basis of the principles and norms of international law, including referral to the International Court of Justice. The Ministers recalled the honest and sincere initiatives taken and the repeated calls issued to the Islamic Republic of Iran by the United Arab Emirates, the members of the Gulf Cooperation Council, the Damascus Declaration States, the Council of the League of Arab States and, most recently, the Arab Summit Conference.

The Ministers reaffirmed the sovereignty of the United Arab Emirates over the islands and expressed unconditional support for all the peaceful measures taken with a view to restoring that sovereignty.

The Ministers reiterated their call to the Iranian Government to end its occupation of the islands, to desist from pursuing a policy of imposing <u>faits accomplis</u> by force, to halt the adoption of unilateral measures, to remove the

effects of any unilateral measures taken or any installations built, to adopt peaceful means of resolving the ongoing dispute in accordance with the principles and norms of international law, and to agree to the referral of the issue to the International Court of Justice.

The Ministers affirmed that the security and stability of the United Arab Emirates and the preservation of its independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity are an integral part of the security of the Arab States of the Gulf and of the security of the Arab nation as a whole. They stressed that the Islamic Republic of Iran must adhere to the principles of good-neighbourliness, respect for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the States of the region and non-interference in the internal affairs of other States, must adopt peaceful means for the resolution of disputes between States in its relations with the States of the region and must meet the obligations that these principles entail.

The Ministers stated that their countries looked forward to positive change in Turkey's relations with Syria and expressed optimism that there were new signs in Turkish policy that heralded the establishment of relations of cooperation and good-neighbourliness between the two countries and the strengthening of joint Arab-Turkish interests. They expressed the hope that the Turkish Government would reconsider the Turkish-Israeli military agreement so as to avoid prejudice to the security of the Arab States.

The Ministers discussed violence and international terrorism and affirmed their condemnation of the terrorist bombing that took place at Khobar in Saudi Arabia on 25 June 1996. At the same time, they affirmed their full support and backing for Saudi Arabia in combating terrorism and expressed confidence in its ability to cope with such terrorist acts.

While the Ministers condemn attempts to stigmatize legitimate national resistance as terrorism, they condemn those acts of terrorism, sabotage and disruption in all their forms to which a number of States, including Arab States, are being subjected with the aim of undermining their security and stability. They express their support for these States and for the efforts being made and the steps being taken to convene an international conference to address the various aspects of the phenomenon of international terrorism. At the same time, they uphold the inalienable right to resist occupation and aggression. They call for the coordination of international efforts to bring a halt to acts of violence and terrorism, to ensure that those who perpetrate such acts are brought to justice and to prevent terrorist elements from using the territory of any State in order to obtain funding or arms supplies and from using foreign information media for purposes of incitement to acts of violence or terrorism.

The Ministers welcomed the Agreement on Principles reached by the Governments of Yemen and Eritrea concerning the submission of their dispute to international arbitration, affirming the need to promote neighbourly relations and the common interests of the two countries. That would have positive repercussions on the security and stability of the region.

The Ministers expressed their concern at the continuing deterioration of the situation in Somalia and called on the leaders of the warring factions to meet their responsibility to achieve overall national reconciliation and form a single national authority in which all groups of the Somali people are represented.

The Ministers further urged all the Afghan factions to abide by the cease-fire and to comply with the Mecca accord for the achievement of peace and reconciliation in Afghanistan.

The Ministers affirmed their support for the League of Arab States, for the enhancement of its standing and for the assignment to it of a more active role. There is a need for compliance with the Pact of the League and with the resolutions adopted by it in order to safeguard the higher interests of the Arab nation.

The Ministers expressed their gratitude and appreciation to the Sultanate of Oman, to the Omani Government under the leadership of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Bin Said and to the Omani people for the hospitality with which they had been received, and they wished the country further progress and prosperity.

The Ministers look forward to holding their next meeting in Egypt in January 1997.